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(54) **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR DETERMINING
GEO-LOCATION(S) IN IMAGES**

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7, 2009.

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H04N 7/18 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC **H04N 7/18** (2013.01)

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See application file for complete search history.

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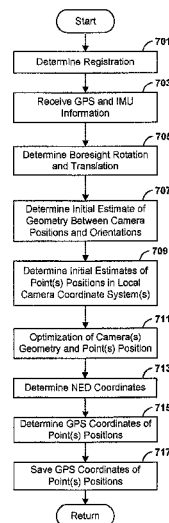
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(57)

ABSTRACT

Determining GPS coordinates of some image point(s) posi-
tions in at least two images using a processor configured by
program instructions. Receiving position information of
some of the positions where an image capture device captured
an image. Determining geometry by triangulating various
registration objects in the images. Determining GPS coordi-
nates of the image point(s) positions in at least one of the
images. Saving GPS coordinates to memory. This system and
method may be used to determine GPS coordinates of objects
in an image.

1 Claim, 7 Drawing Sheets



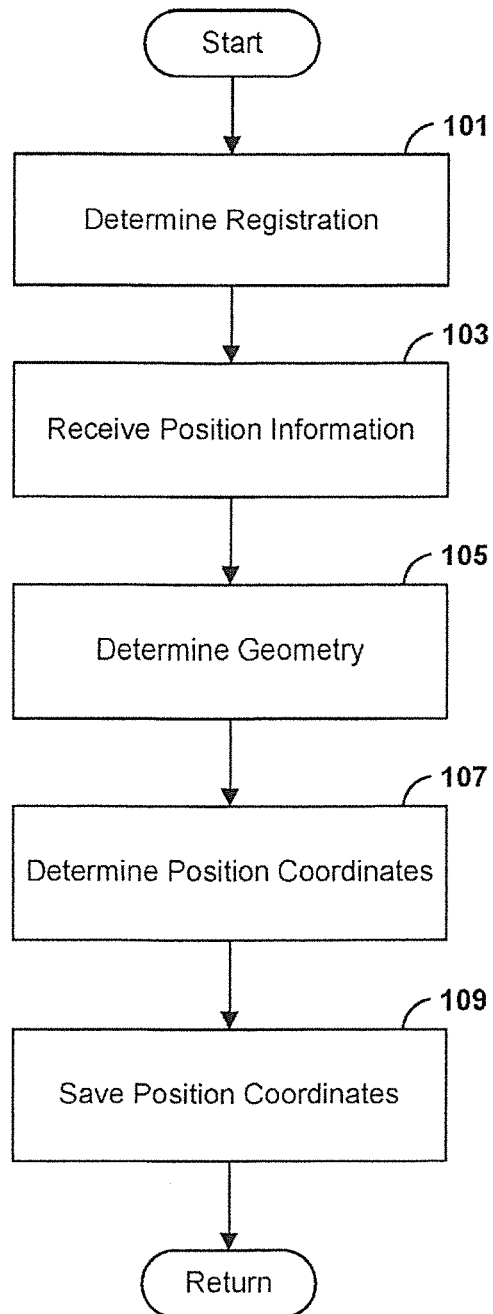


FIGURE 1

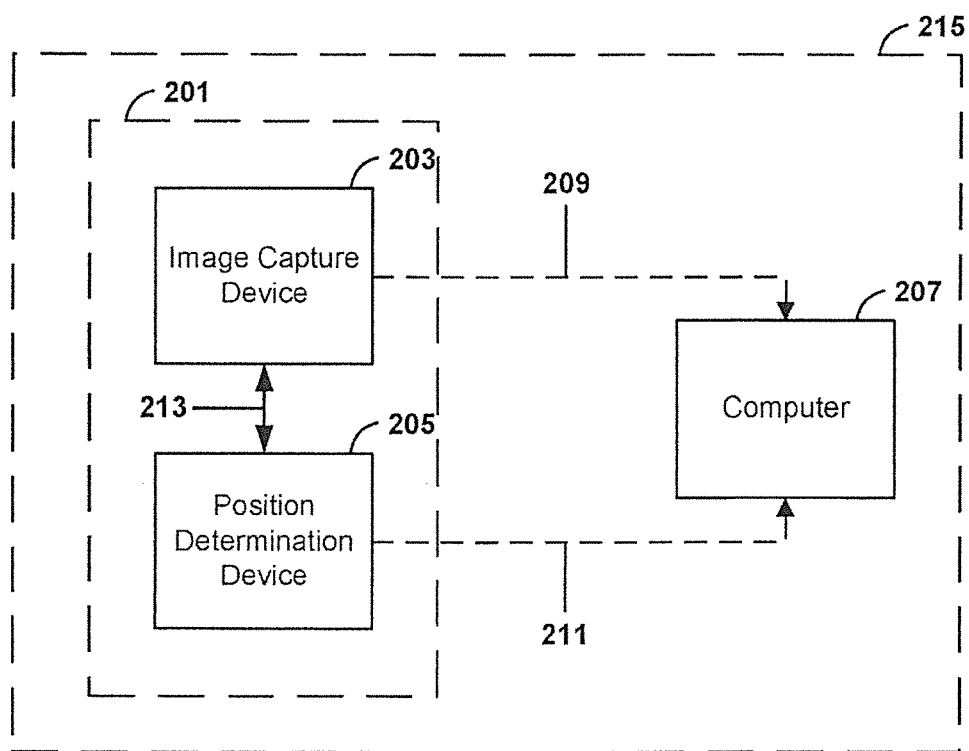


FIGURE 2

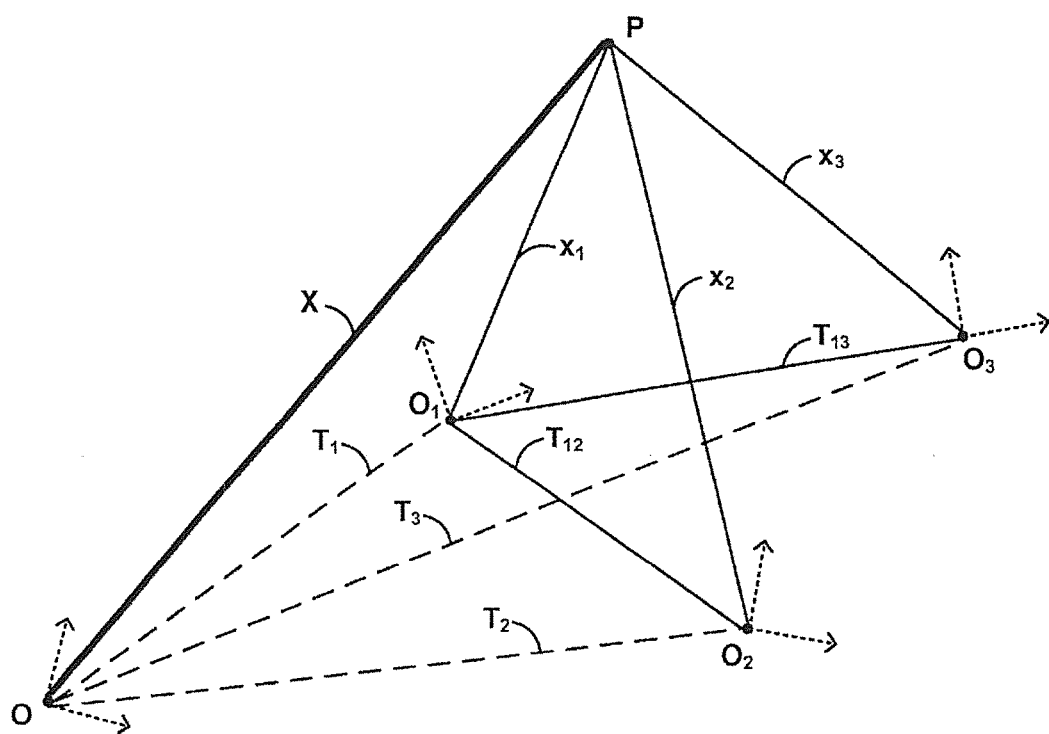


FIGURE 3

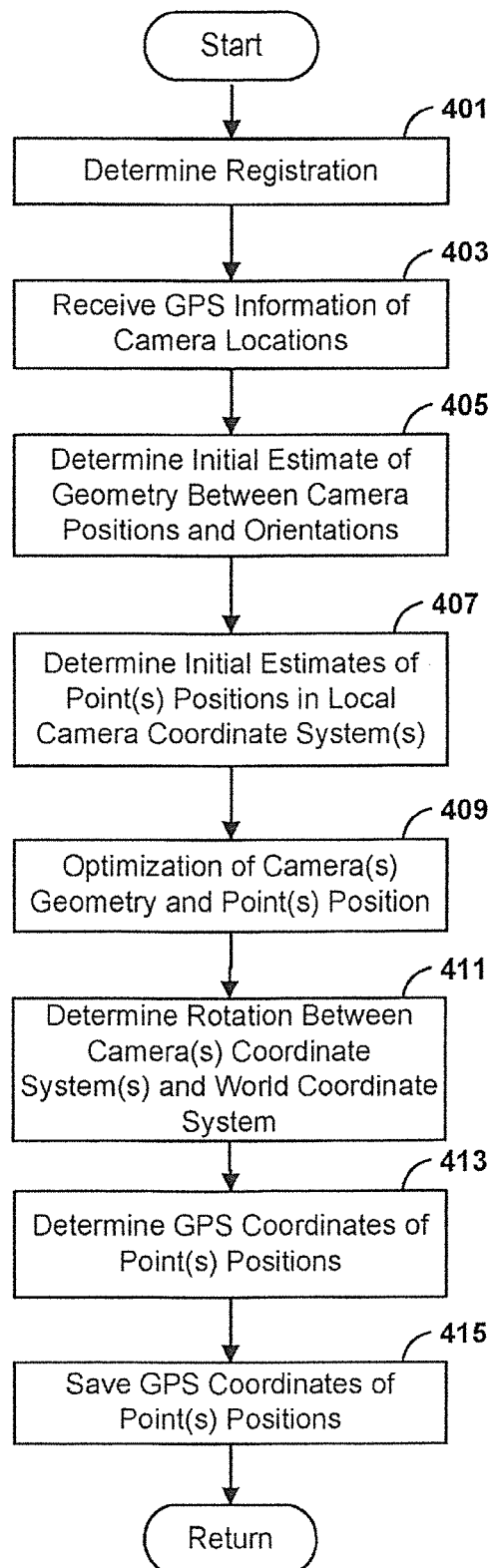


FIGURE 4

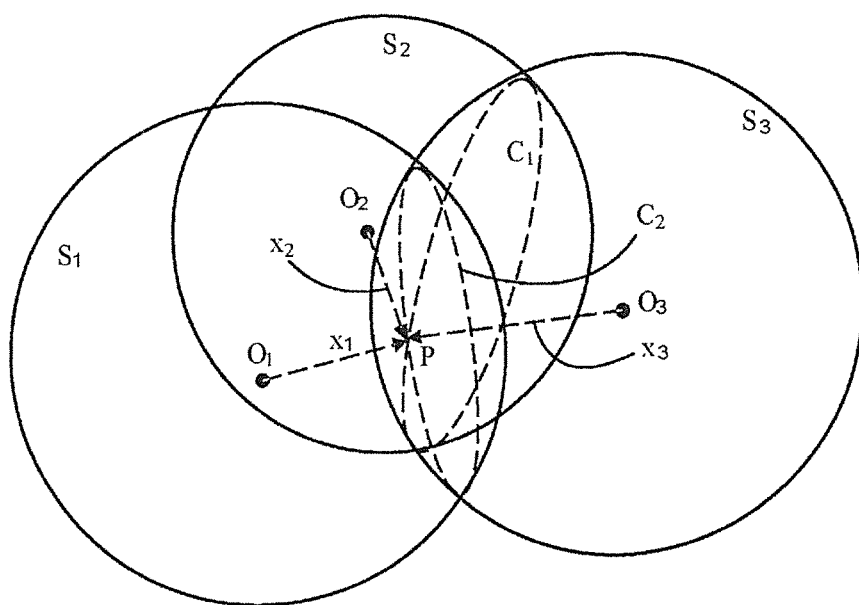


FIGURE 5

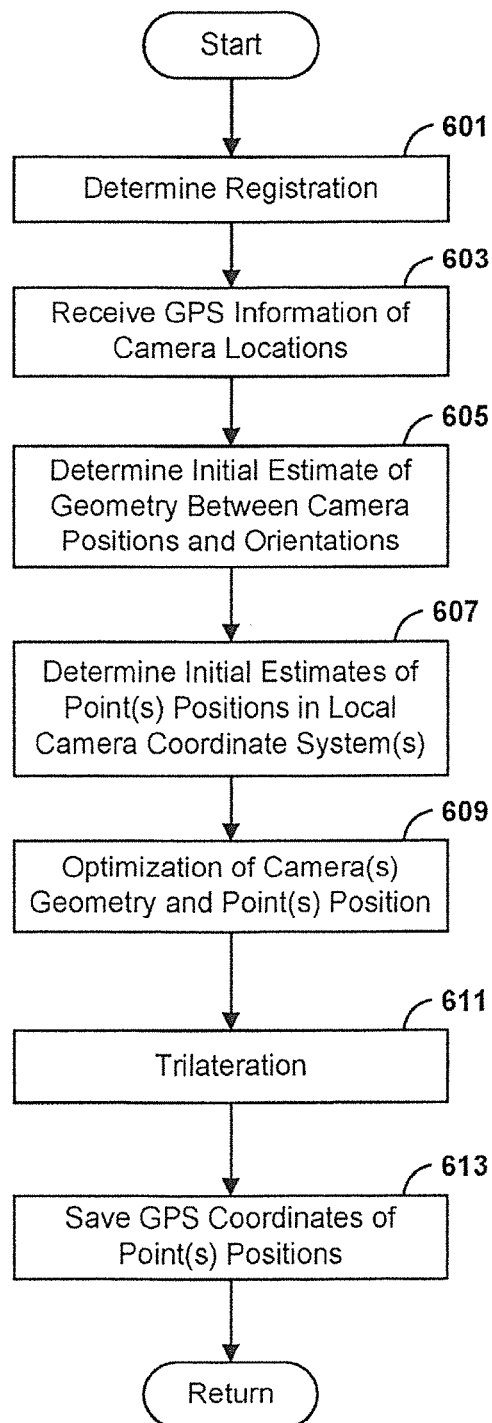


FIGURE 6

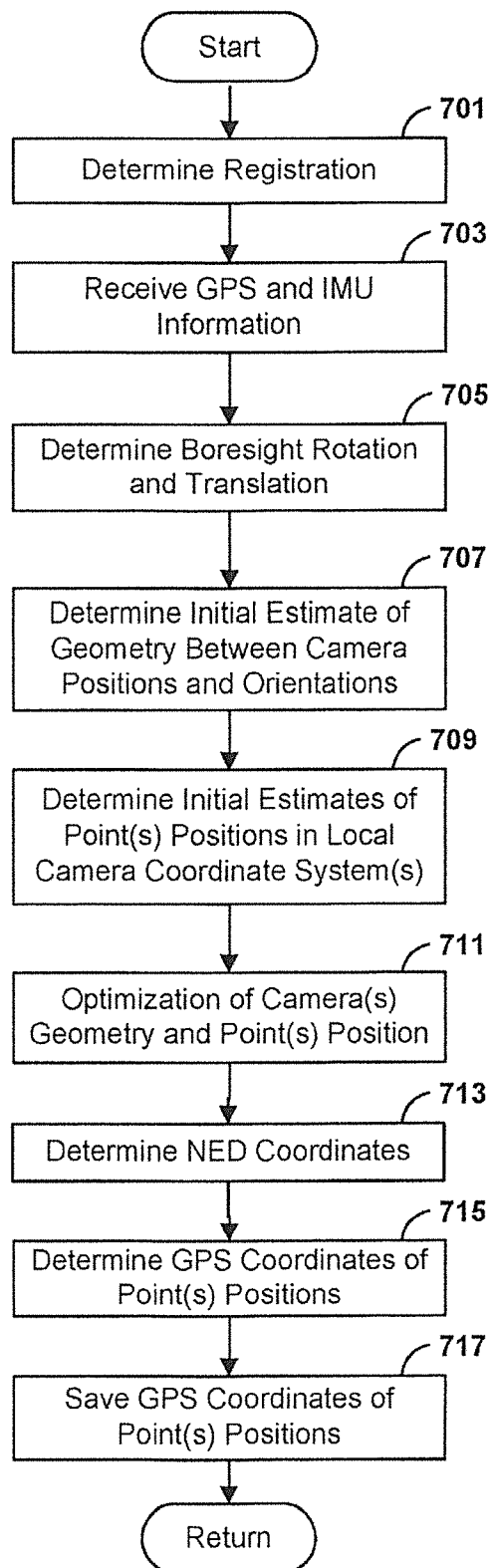


FIGURE 7

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SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR DETERMINING GEO-LOCATION(S) IN IMAGES

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION(S)

The application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 12/683,185, filed Jan. 6, 2010, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/267,243 filed Dec. 7, 2009, the disclosures of both of which are incorporated by reference herein.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to position determination, and more particularly determining the position, location or coordinates of objects, or points in an image with respect to a coordinate system other than the local coordinate system of the image itself.

Determining the position of various objects in an image is useful for understanding the distance between objects or possibly the absolute distance between an object and another object that may not be in the image. Positions of objects in an image are usually determined by taking a photograph of an area. In the photograph there is usually a reference object whose position is known. The position of the other objects in the image is determined by computing the distance away from the reference object with the known position. The reference object with the known position enables the other objects to have known positions within the coordinate system of the photograph as well as a coordinate system that may be outside of the photograph.

Another way of determining the approximate positions of objects is simply by GPS image tagging. A GPS enabled camera may be utilized to take photographs. Each photograph may be tagged with the GPS information of the location of the camera when the photograph is taken. The GPS information can be associated with the captured image via a time stamp of both the GPS information and the image or the GPS image can simply be embedded in the digital data of the photograph. Unfortunately, GPS tagging only records the position of the camera when the photograph was captured. The GPS positions of objects in the photograph are still unknown.

Another method of determining positions of objects is through surveying. Surveyors use optical instruments to locate and/or triangulate positions on the ground. For example, a surveyor may be required to survey the boundaries of a property. Usually, the surveyor will find the nearest monument that has a known position. In this example, the monument may be several blocks from the property that may be required to survey. Once a monument is located, the surveyor uses optics and a human eye to physically measure distances from the monument. Unfortunately, surveying is prone to errors such as optical errors and human eye errors. Also, the surveying method only determines the position of a single point at a time with a great deal of effort.

Unfortunately, many of the systems and methods described above have problems. The position of an object may still be required even when there are no positions of reference objects available. Multiple points may need to be determined simultaneously. Accuracy, greater than the errors inherent in the human eye and optics may be required.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to position determination, and more particularly determining the position,

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location or coordinates of objects, or points in an image with respect to a coordinate system other than the local coordinate system of the image itself.

Position determination may be implemented in a general purpose computer or an embedded system, for example a digital camera, cellular handset, GPS receiver, or any combination of these devices. In one embodiment the invention may determine the UPS coordinates of each pixel in an image. The pixel coordinates may be determined first by performing image registration on three or more images to determine corresponding pixels. Receiving the GPS coordinates at each camera position where each of the three images were taken. Determining the rotations of the various camera coordinate systems with respect to the ECEF coordinate system or WGS84 coordinate system or other coordinate systems and translations of the camera coordinate system with respect to the ECEF coordinate system or WGS84 coordinate system or other coordinate systems optical. Determining the GPS coordinates of each pixel in the image using the rotation and translation information. And finally, saving the GPS coordinates into a memory. In some embodiments the GPS coordinates of each pixel are determined with three or more images. In other embodiments, the GPS coordinates of each pixel are determined with a single image and information from an Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU).

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a method showing one aspect of the present invention, for determining position coordinates.

FIG. 2 is a block diagram showing one aspect of the present invention depicting a limited number of components constituting an exemplary system for implementing the present invention.

FIG. 3 is a diagram showing one aspect of the present invention depicting the geometry where at three separate positions image capture devices capture images that include point P.

FIG. 4 is a block diagram of a method showing one aspect of the present invention for determining the GPS coordinates of a point(s) positions.

FIG. 5 is a diagram showing an alternative depiction of FIG. 3.

FIG. 6 is a block diagram of a method showing one aspect of the present invention for determining the GPS coordinates of point(s) positions comprising trilateration.

FIG. 7 is a block diagram of a method showing one aspect of the present invention for determining the GPS coordinates of point(s) positions using GPS/IMU.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

In the following description of the preferred embodiments of the present invention, reference is made to the accompanying drawings which form a part hereof, and in which is shown by way of illustration specific embodiments in which the invention may be practiced. It is understood that other embodiments may be utilized and structural changes may be made without departing from the scope of the present invention.

With reference to FIG. 1, in block 101 the process determines registration between three or more images. Registration determines the corresponding points, pixels, shapes, objects, lines, corners, neighborhoods, regions, projected images or any other type of registration object that can be depicted in an image or multiple images. In block 103 the

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process receives position information. In one embodiment, receiving position information comprises receiving the position information from each camera location where an image was taken. For example, a person with a camera with a built in GPS receiver may take three pictures of a single area or object from three separate locations. The GPS receiver tags each of the pictures or images with the GPS information from each location where the picture was taken. These GPS tags are received by the process. In other embodiments the position information may be a relative position (location) of a receiver with respect to transmission towers in a telecommunications system or in a radio frequency based system. In other embodiments receiving position information comprises receiving GPS coordinates that may be WGS84 or ECEF or derived from WGS84 or ECEF. In other embodiments, receiving position information comprises receiving a location in any positioning system. In block **105** the process determines the geometry. In one embodiment determining the geometry comprises using the position information to determine distances and angles between the various camera locations and corresponding registration objects in the images. In another embodiment determining the geometry comprises using the position information to determine the rotations and translations between various camera locations and corresponding shapes in the image. In another embodiment determining the geometry comprises triangulating various registration objects in the captured images of the various cameras. In another embodiment determining the geometry comprises determining the 3-D model associated with the distance to visible objects in the captured images. In block **107** the process determines the position coordinates. In one embodiment determining the position coordinates comprises determining the coordinates with respect to a coordinate system external from the camera coordinate system of various shapes in the picture or image. In block **109** the process saves the position coordinates. In one embodiment saving the position coordinates comprises saving position coordinates to a memory. Each of the blocks may be performed by the process in an order that is different than that which is depicted in FIG. 1. Additionally, each of the blocks may be optional in the overall process described in FIG. 1.

FIG. 2 depicts several components that may be used to implement the present invention. An image capture device **203** may be used in the present invention to capture images, pictures, photographs, JPEGs, Motion JPEGs, or video all referred to herein as images or image in the singular. A position determination device **205** may be used in the present invention to determine the current position of the image capture device **203** upon capturing an image. In one embodiment, a general purpose computer **207** in the form of a conventional personal computer may be used in the present invention to execute instructions. In other embodiments computer **207** may be a computer embedded in another type of system.

With reference to FIG. 2, **203** is an image capture device. In some embodiments, **203** is a digital camera that comprises an optical lens, memory that may be removable, controller for controlling the digital functions of the camera, and a communications port for transferring the digital images to another device or computer. In other embodiments, **203** may be a video camera that comprises an optical lens, storage for storing the captured video frames such as memory, tape, or optical disk, a controller for controlling the digital functions of the camera, and a communications port for transferring the video frames to another device or computer. In other embodiments **203** may be a cellular phone handset that comprises an optical lens, storage such as a memory for storing captured video frames or images, an embedded processor for control-

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ling the functions of the cellular handset, a communications port for transferring the captured video frames or images to another device or computer. In each of the embodiments for **203** described above the storage element may be a memory that may be removable such as an SD card. Additionally, with reference to **203**, the communications port described in the above embodiments may be wired such as a USB port or mini USB port or any other wired communication technology or it may be a wireless port such as Wi-Fi or Bluetooth or any other wireless communication technology. In some embodiments, image capture device **203** may be mounted on an aircraft, land or sea vehicle, helmet, clothing, linear mechanical stage, blimp, rotational stage, tripod, surveyor's tripod, rope, or any moving platform. **205** is a position determination device. In some embodiments **205** is a GPS receiver. In other embodiments **205** may be an IMU. In other embodiments **205** may be a laser radar or electromagnetic radar. In some embodiments **205** may be a local positioning system LPS receiver. In some embodiments the position determination device **205** and the image capture device **203** are combined into one device **201**. **201** is indicated by a dashed line to indicate that in some embodiments the position determination device **205** and the image capture device **203** may be combined into one device **201**. For example **201** may be a digital camera or cellular phone handset that has an on board GPS receiver or LPS receiver. In the embodiments where the image capture device **203** and the position determination device **205** are not combined then a communications capability may exist between the two devices **213**. This communications capability may exist to synchronize the position information with each image or video frame. Sometimes the image capture device **203** and the position determination device **205** do not have a communications capability and the image or video frames are synchronized with clock or timing information after the data has been stored in each device separately. In this case where the image capture device **203** and the position determination device **205** do not have a communication capability with each other, each of these devices may be able to transfer its information to a computer **207** or similar device (i.e. other type of embedded system). **209** and **211** indicate that each device may be equipped with a communications port that may be used to transfer information. **209** and **211** may each be wired or wireless. In the embodiment where **209** and **211** are wired these connections do not have to be permanently connected to **207** but rather may be connected to **207** when information transfer is needed. Synchronization of the information between the image capture device **203** and the position determination device **207** may occur in computer **207**. In some embodiments **207** is a general purpose computer equipped with a processor, memory, a display device, keyboard, input device, USB port, Ethernet card, optionally other wired or wireless communication ports, and instructions stored in memory and executed by the processor. In other embodiments **207** is an embedded system that includes a processor, memory, wired or wireless communications port, display and instructions stored in memory and executed by the processor. In some embodiment's image capture device **203**, position determination device **205**, and computer **207** may all be combined into one device **215**. In one embodiment, **215** may be a digital camera with an on board GPS receiver and a processor capable of performing the processes described in the present invention. In some embodiments computer **207** may be a single chip such as an ASIC, FPGA, computing device, semiconductor device or microprocessor embedded in a device that is capable of performing the processes described in the present invention. A semiconductor device may comprise a single monolithic silicon type integrated circuit.

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FIG. 3 depicts an example where an image or multiple images are captured at three different positions O_1 , O_2 , and O_3 . In some embodiments, Camera 1, Camera 2, and Camera 3 refers to cameras at positions O_1 , O_2 , and O_3 respectively. In other embodiments Camera 1, Camera 2, and Camera 3 refers to the same camera that may have moved to each of the locations O_1 , O_2 , and O_3 . For example an aircraft or moving platform may be equipped with a camera and arrive at positions O_1 , O_2 , and O_3 and different times. In one embodiment these three positions are related to the optical centers of each of the cameras. In one embodiment each of the images captured includes the point in common P whose projection is in the image. Point P is a point in 3D space. Point P may also correspond to a point in the images. In one embodiment the corresponding image projections of the point P is determined through registration as discussed below. In other embodiments, point P may be a single point in either of the set of points g_1, g_2, \dots, g_n , not indicated in FIG. 3. The projected point P in common is determined by using registration. The point set is a point set such that each point in the group can be viewed by camera 1, and the point has corresponding matching points in some other cameras in the group g_1 . The point set g_2 is a point set such that each point in the group can be viewed by camera 2 but not camera 1, and it has corresponding matching points in some other cameras of the group g_2 , and so on for other point groups. The point O is considered the origin or the center of the earth in Earth-Center, Earth-Fixed (ECEF) coordinates or also known as world coordinate system. The vector X is the position of point P in ECEF, GPS or WGS84 coordinates. The vector x_1 is the position of point P in the local coordinate system O_1 . The vector x_2 is the position of point P in the local coordinate system O_2 . The vector x_3 is the position of point P in the local coordinate system O_3 . Local geometry refers to geometrical elements such as x_1, x_2 , and x_3 described in local coordinate systems such as O_1, O_2 , and O_3 respectively. T_1 is the vector translation from the point O to the point O_1 in the O coordinate system. T_2 is the vector translation from the point O to the point O_2 in the O coordinate system. T_3 is the vector translation from the point O to the point O_3 in the O coordinate system. Another way of describing T_1, T_2 and T_3 is simply that they are the ECEF coordinates of the three camera positions O_1, O_2 , and O_3 . t_{12} is the vector translation in O_1 coordinates from the point O_1 to O_2 . t_{13} is the vector translation in O_1 coordinates from the point O_1 to O_3 . The dotted lines at each of the points O, O_1, O_2 , and O_3 depict local coordinate systems associated with each of these points. In some embodiments the x-y plane of the local coordinate systems for O, O_1, O_2 , and O_3 may coincide with the image plane of the camera while the z axis is orthogonal to this plane. For example x_1 is the position of point P in the local coordinate system O_1 . This may be different from x_3 because it is the position of the same point P but in a different coordinate system O_3 . Each of these coordinate systems O, O_1, O_2 , and O_3 may be rotated and translated into different orientations with respect to each other. In one aspect of the present invention we determine X from each of three images taken at known positions O_1, O_2 , and O_3 . Not indicated in FIG. 3 are the rotation matrices between each of the coordinate systems mentioned above with origins at O, O_1, O_2 , and O_3 . R_1 is the rotation from coordinate system O to coordinate system O_1 . R_2 is the rotation from coordinate system O to coordinate system O_2 . R_3 is the rotation from coordinate system O to coordinate system O_3 . R_{12} is the rotation from coordinate system O_1 to coordinate system O_2 . R_{13} is the

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rotation from coordinate system O_1 to coordinate system O_3 . FIG. 3 satisfies the following geometric relationships:

$$x_1 = R_1(X - T_1) \quad [1]$$

$$x_2 = R_2(X - T_2) = R_{12}(x_1 + t_{12}) \quad [2]$$

$$x_3 = R_3(X - T_3) = R_{13}(x_1 + t_{13}) \quad [3]$$

$$R_2 = R_{12}R_1 \quad [4]$$

$$R_3 = R_{13}R_1 \quad [5]$$

$$t_{12} = R_1(T_2 - T_1) \quad [6]$$

$$t_{13} = R_1(T_3 - T_1) \quad [7]$$

The vector x_1 is the description of point P in the local coordinate system O_1 . Referring to FIG. 3, the vector $\overline{O_1P}$ is the difference between the vectors X and T_1 in the O coordinate system. In order to arrive at the vector x_1 , the vector $\overline{O_1P}$ as described in coordinate system O, needs to be rotated by the rotation R_1 in the O coordinate system thus arriving at equation [1]. Equations [2] and [3] follow similar vector algebra deduction and will not be discussed further. Equation [4] describes the rotation R_2 as a composite rotation of R_{12} and R_1 . Similarly Equation [5] describes the rotation R_3 as a composite rotation of R_{13} and R_1 . t_{12} is the vector translation in O_1 coordinates from the point O_1 to O_2 . Referring to FIG. 3, the vector $\overline{O_1O_2}$ is the difference between the vectors T_2 and T_1 in the O coordinate system. In order to arrive at the vector t_{12} the vector $\overline{O_1O_2}$ described in coordinate system O, needs to be rotated by the rotation R_1 in the O coordinate system thus arriving at equation [6]. Equation [7] follows similar vector algebra deduction and will not be discussed further.

According to equation [1], in order to determine the position of point P in the O coordinate system, we need to solve equation [1] for X:

$$X = R_1^{-1}x_1 + T_1 \quad [8]$$

Where R_1^{-1} is the inverse matrix of the rotation matrix R_1 .

X can be determined using equation [8] in which T_1 is a vector defined by the GPS coordinates of position O_1 . In one embodiment, R_1 may be determined through t_{12} and t_{13} . Additionally, in one embodiment x_1 may be determined through relative rotations R_{12} and R_{13} as well as translation t_{12}, t_{13} , and eight matching points or triples in each of three images.

The process described in FIG. 4 determines the GPS coordinates for a position P where there at least three images that contain point P and seven other points in common captured from at least three separate positions. Firstly, the process determines the values for $R_{12}, R_{13}, t_{12}, t_{13}$ using the eight points algorithm. The eight points utilized in this algorithm may or may not include point P. However, the points must exist in each of the images taken at each of a minimum of three camera positions. Next the process determines R_1 through relative geometry of three camera positions and orientations as well as three absolute GPS positions of the cameras. Next the process determines the value for x_1 in accordance with the camera equation which also utilizes geometrical quantities determined from the relative positions and absolute positions of O_1, O_2 , and O_3 and eight matching triples. An iteration process is utilized to increase the accuracy of the value of X using a bundle adjustment technique. Finally, the process saves the GPS coordinates for the value X into a memory.

With reference to FIG. 4, in block 401 the process determines registration. In some embodiments, registration determines the corresponding pixels, matching pixels, matching

sub-pixels or sub pixel areas, or corresponding locations in the image plane that may exist in multiple images. In some embodiments, registration is determined using correlation. In other embodiments, registration is determined using matching local neighborhoods. In some embodiments registration is determined by matching one pixel to multiple pixels. In yet other embodiments registration is determined by matching more than one pixel to other multiple pixels. Other methods of performing registration may be used. In other embodiments, registration is determined using the systems and processes described in U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/230,679, titled "3D Matching" and is hereby incorporated by reference. In block 403 the process receives GPS information of at least three camera locations (positions). In some embodiments receiving GPS information comprises receiving GPS coordinates that may be WGS84 or ECEF or derived from WGS84 or ECEF. In other embodiments, receiving GPS information comprises receiving GPS coordinates that may be coordinates that are derived from a relative position (location) of a receiver with respect to transmission towers in a telecommunications system or in a radio frequency based system. In some embodiments, receiving GPS information comprises transferring GPS coordinate information for each of the images captured from a GPS receiver or a camera with built in GPS receiver to a memory. The memory may be located in a general purpose computer or an embedded system. In other embodiments, receiving GPS information comprises transferring GPS coordinate information for each of the images captured from memory to a processor for processing. In other embodiments, receiving GPS information comprises a person entering GPS coordinates by hand into a general purpose computer or embedded system. In block 405 the process determines initial estimates of the geometry between camera positions and orientations. In one embodiment with three camera positions as in FIG. 3, the process determines initial estimates of the geometry between the camera positions and orientations. The geometry between the camera positions and orientations in this embodiment comprises R_{12} , R_{13} , t_{12} , and t_{13} . The process determines the initial estimates of R_{12} , R_{13} , t_{12} , and t_{13} using the eight point algorithm. The points used in the eight point algorithm may be eight triples that are determined from the registration process in 401. In another embodiment, the eight point algorithm may use eight pairs in each pair of images that are determined from the registration process in 401.

In one embodiment a processor is configured by program instructions to perform the eight point algorithm in order to determine the initial values for R_{12} , R_{13} , t_{12} , and t_{13} . The eight point algorithm is given in "An Invitation to 3-D Vision" by Yi Ma et al (ISBN 0-387-00893-4) Springer-Verlag New York, Inc. 2004 which is hereby incorporated by reference.

In block 407 the process determines the initial estimates of point(s) positions in local camera coordinate(s) systems. In one embodiment a processor executes instructions to determine x_1 using the camera equation as follows:

$$x_1 = \lambda_1^P \cdot u_1^P \quad [9]$$

The camera equation is given in "An Invitation to 3-D Vision" by Yi Ma et al (ISBN 0-387-00893-4) Springer-Verlag, New York, Inc. 2004 which is hereby incorporated by reference. u_1^P which denotes the point P in camera 1 in its image plane coordinates is obtained by first obtaining point triple

$$U_1^P = \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}_1, U_2^P = \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}_2, U_3^P = \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}_3,$$

where

$$\begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}_c$$

are homogenous image pixel coordinates in pixel units of the point P in camera c. Camera calibration matrix K converts pixel coordinates to image plane coordinates through $u_c^P = K^{-1}U_c^P$, where c is the camera 1, 2, or 3. u_c^P denotes the point P in camera c in its image coordinates. The definition of K and obtaining K is given in "An Invitation to 3-D Vision" by Yi Ma et al (ISBN 0-387-00893-4) Springer-Verlag New York, Inc. 2004 which is hereby incorporated by reference.

Similarly, the camera equation for point P in the other camera coordinates is as follows:

$$x_2 = \lambda_2^P u_2^P = R_{12}(x_1 + t_{12}) = \lambda_1^P R_{12} u_1^P + R_{12} t_{12} \quad [10]$$

$$x_3 = \lambda_3^P u_3^P = R_{13}(x_1 + t_{13}) = \lambda_1^P R_{13} u_1^P + R_{13} t_{13} \quad [11]$$

and more generally,

$$\lambda_c^P u_c^P = R_{1c}(x_1 + t_{1c}) = \lambda_1^P R_{1c} u_1^P + R_{1c} t_{1c} \quad [12]$$

The cross product of camera equations [10] and [11] with its corresponding vector representing point P in its image plane coordinates (e.g. u_2^P and u_3^P respectively) provides the following:

$$\lambda_1^P u_2^P \times u_3^P = R_{12} u_1^P \times u_3^P + R_{12} t_{12} \times u_3^P = 0 \quad [13]$$

$$\lambda_1^P u_3^P \times u_2^P = R_{13} u_1^P \times u_2^P + R_{13} t_{13} \times u_2^P = 0 \quad [14]$$

A processor is configured by program instructions to determine λ_1^P by the point depth equation as follows:

$$\frac{1}{\lambda_1^P} = - \frac{\sum_{c=2}^3 (u_c^P \times R_{1c} t_{1c})^T (u_c^P \times R_{1c} \cdot u_1^P)}{\sum_{c=2}^3 |u_c^P \times R_{1c} t_{1c}|^2} \quad [15]$$

Equation [15] computes λ_1^P where the point P is seen in each of the three images taken from positions O_1 , O_2 , and O_3 as seen in FIG. 3. In other embodiments, λ_1^P may be determined for each point P that is an element of either of the point sets g_1, g_2, \dots, g_n . In this case the point depth equation more generally is described in [16] below:

$$\frac{1}{\lambda_1^P} = - \frac{\sum_{c \in g_1} (u_c^P \times R_{1c} t_{1c})^T (u_c^P \times R_{1c} \cdot u_1^P)}{\sum_{c \in g_1} |u_c^P \times R_{1c} t_{1c}|^2} \quad [16]$$

In block 409 the process optimizes the camera(s) geometry and the point(s) position. In one embodiment the optimization may be minimizing a re-projection error for the solution of R_{12} , R_{13} , t_{12} , and t_{13} . A re-projection error at the first iteration is given by a function of differences of the positions of the

point P in the image coordinate system of camera 1 when re-projected into the image plane of camera 2 and camera 3 with the prior estimates of the R_{12} , R_{13} , t_{12} , t_{13} . In one embodiment the error function for a single point P may be expressed as:

$$E = (re_2(u_1^P) - u_2^P)^2 + (re_3(u_1^P) - u_3^P)^2 \quad [17]$$

where re means re-projection from camera image 1 to camera image 2 or from camera image 1 to camera image 3. And these re-projections are determined using the prior estimates of R_{12} , R_{13} , t_{12} , and t_{13} . A general bundle adjustment may be used to achieve each camera's rotation and translation vector relative to camera 1 by minimizing the re-projection error:

$$E = \sum (\tilde{u}_c^P - u_c^P)^2 = \sum_{g_1} (\tilde{u}_c^P - u_c^P)^2 + \sum_{g_2} (\tilde{u}_c^P - u_c^P)^2 + \dots + \sum_{g_n} (\tilde{u}_c^P - u_c^P)^2 \quad [18]$$

where $\tilde{u}_c^P = re_c(u_1^P)$ and c refers to camera 1, 2, 3, . . . and where g_1, g_2, \dots, g_n are point groups or sets of points with g_1 being a point set such that each point in the group can be viewed by camera 1, and the point has corresponding matching points in some other cameras in the group g_1 . g_2 is a point set such that each point in the group can be viewed by camera 2 but not camera 1, and it has corresponding matching points in some other cameras of the group g_2 , and so on for other point groups. And where p in [18] ranges through all of the points that are matched in corresponding groups g_1, g_2, \dots, g_n . The bundle adjustment described in equation [18] is iterated until the error is reduced to a predetermined threshold or other stopping criteria. Once the bundle adjustment is complete R_{12} , R_{13} , t_{12} , and t_{13} are known.

In block 411 the process determines the rotation between the camera(s) coordinate system(s) and the world coordinate system. In one embodiment determining the rotation between the camera(s) coordinate system(s) and the world coordinate system is determining R_1 . A processor is configured by program instructions to determine R_1 by first determining an axis of rotation of R_1 and then determining the amount of rotation around the axis. A vector v may be used to express the direction of the rotational axis as well as the magnitude of the rotation. Whereby the rotational axis of the rotation R_1 is the direction of this vector. And the amount of rotation R_1 is the magnitude of this vector. We can find this vector v and then use it to determine R_1 . According to this embodiment we define the following vectors:

$$v_1 = (T_{12} \times t_{12}) \times (T_{12} + t_{12}) \quad [19] \quad 50$$

$$v_2 = (T_{13} \times t_{13}) \times (T_{13} + t_{13}) \quad [20]$$

where $T_{12} = T_2 - T_1$ and $T_{13} = T_3 - T_1$. Equation [19] is a vector v_1 which also represents a plane which is normal to the vector v_1 . Any vector on this plane can be a rotation axis that can rotate T_{12} to t_{12} . Similarly, we also have equation [20] which is a vector v_2 which also represents a plane which is normal to the vector v_2 representing a plane which is a rotation axis that can rotate T_{13} to t_{13} . The cross product of these two vectors is the vector v.

$$v = v_1 \times v_2 \quad [21]$$

v is the rotation axis of our rotation matrix R_1 . Next we need to determine the amount of rotation or the length of the vector v. The length of vector v is determined by the following equation:

$$\cos(\Theta) = \frac{s_1 \cdot s_2}{|s_1| \cdot |s_2|} \quad [22]$$

where

$$s_1 = T_{13} - \left(\frac{T_{13} \cdot v}{|v|} \right) \frac{v}{|v|}$$

and

$$s_2 = t_{13} - \left(\frac{t_{13} \cdot v}{|v|} \right) \frac{v}{|v|}.$$

The vectors s_1 and s_2 form a plane that is normal to the vector v. Therefore, v is the rotation axis of s_1 to s_2 where the amount of rotation is represented in equation [22]. The amount of the rotation in magnitude is the value of Θ in equation [22]. The same angle Θ also represents a rotation between T_{13} to t_{13} . We can define the final rotation vector that is equivalent to

$$\omega = \frac{v}{|v|} \cdot \Theta \quad [23]$$

where

$$\frac{v}{|v|}$$

is the direction of the vector and Θ is the magnitude of the rotation. We can also express the vector ω as

$$\omega = \begin{pmatrix} v_x \\ v_y \\ v_z \end{pmatrix}$$

and define the matrix

$$\bar{\omega} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & -v_z & v_y \\ v_z & 0 & -v_x \\ -v_y & v_x & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

Next we can determine the matrix R_1 by using the Rodrigues formula for a rotation matrix given in "An Invitation to 3-D Vision" by Yi Ma et al (ISBN 0-387-00893-4) Springer-Verlag New York, Inc. 2004 which is hereby incorporated by reference and also expressed in [21] below:

$$R_1 = I + \frac{\bar{\omega}}{|\omega|} \cdot \sin(|\omega|) + \frac{\bar{\omega}^2}{|\omega|^2} \cdot (1 - \cos(|\omega|)) \quad [24]$$

where I is the identity matrix.

In block 413 the process determines the GPS coordinates for all points for which correspondences were established through the registration block above. In one embodiment, a

processor is instructed to perform the computation defined in equation [8] for each of the image pixels or sub-pixels using the final values determined from the previous process blocks in FIG. 4.

In block 415 the process saves the GPS coordinates of the point(s) positions. In one embodiment the process saves the GPS coordinates to a memory. In another embodiment the process may not necessarily save the GPS coordinates but rather the process simply transmits the GPS coordinates. In another embodiment the process sends the GPS coordinates to a buffer or cache or another computing device.

FIG. 5 depicts the same three positions O_1 , O_2 , and O_3 as in FIG. 3. In one embodiment images are captured at each of these positions. The labels having the same name in both FIG. 3 and FIG. 5 represent the same elements. In FIG. 5 we depict the positions O_1 , O_2 , and O_3 as centers of spheres S_1 , S_2 , and S_3 respectively where S_1 is a sphere with its center at O_1 , S_2 is a sphere with its center at O_2 , and S_3 is a sphere with its center at O_3 . Again as with respect to FIG. 3, Camera 1, Camera 2, and Camera 3 refers to cameras at positions O_1 , O_2 , and O_3 respectively in FIG. 5. In one embodiment these three positions are related to the optical centers of each of the cameras. In one embodiment each of the images captured includes the point in common P whose projection is in the image. The vector X is the position of point P in ECEF, GPS or WGS84 coordinates. The vector X is not shown in FIG. 5 but it is shown in FIG. 3. Point P is a point in 3D space that represents the intersection of the three spheres S_1 , S_2 , and S_3 . Point P may also correspond to a point in the images. In one embodiment the corresponding image projections of the point P is determined through registration as discussed above. In other embodiments, point P may be a single point in either of the set of points g_1, g_2, \dots, g_n , not indicated. As similarly discussed above, the point set g_1 is a point set such that each point in the group can be viewed by camera 1, and the point has corresponding matching points in some other cameras in the group g_1 . The point set g_2 is a point set such that each point in the group can be viewed by camera 2 but not camera 1, and it has corresponding matching points in some other cameras of the group g_2 , and so on for other point groups. The labels having the same name in both FIG. 3 and FIG. 4 represent the same elements. The point O shown in FIG. 3 is not depicted in FIG. 5. The vector X, not shown in FIG. 5, is the position of point P in ECEF, GPS or WGS84 coordinates. The vector x_1 is the position of point P in the local coordinate system O_1 . Also the length of x_1 is the radius of the sphere S_1 . The vector x_2 is the position of point P in the local coordinate system O_2 . Also the length of x_2 is the radius of the sphere S_2 . The vector x_3 is the position of point P in the local coordinate system O_3 . Also the length of x_3 is the radius of the sphere S_3 . The circle C_1 depicts the intersection of spheres S_2 and S_3 . The circle C_2 depicts the intersection of spheres S_1 and S_3 . The intersection of circles C_1 and C_2 depicts the point P. Thus, it follows from FIG. 5 that the point P can be determined as a point that belongs to the intersection of the spheres S_1 , S_2 , and S_3 . If the intersection of the spheres S_1 , S_2 , and S_3 is determined in the world coordinate system therefore point P is determined in the world coordinate system. Trilateration will be used in order to determine the world coordinates of the point P. Trilateration is the process by which the intersection point is determined between three spheres given the coordinates of the centers of the spheres and the radii of each of the spheres.

The process described in FIG. 6 determines the GPS coordinates for a position P where there at least three images that contain point P and seven other points in common captured from at least three separate positions. Firstly, the process determines the values for R_{12} , R_{13} , t_{12} , t_{13} using the eight

points algorithm. The eight points utilized in this algorithm may or may not include point P. However, the points must exist in each of the images taken at each of a minimum of three camera positions. Next the process determines the values for x_1 , x_2 , and x_3 in accordance with the camera equations described in equations [9], [10], and [11] which also utilizes geometrical quantities determined from the relative positions and absolute positions of O_1 , O_2 , and O_3 and eight matching triples. An iteration process is utilized to increase the accuracy of the values R_{12} , R_{13} , t_{12} , t_{13} using a bundle adjustment technique. Next the process of trilateration is performed using the world coordinates for O_1 , O_2 , O_3 and the lengths of x_1 , x_2 , and x_3 . Finally, the process saves the GPS coordinates for the value X into a memory.

With reference to FIG. 6, in block 601 the process determines registration. Block 601 is the same as block 401 and will not be discussed here further. In block 603 the process receives the GPS coordinates of the three camera locations. Block 603 is the same as block 403 and will not be discussed here further. In block 605 the process determines initial estimates of the geometry between camera positions and orientations. Block 605 is the same as block 405 and will not be discussed here further. In block 607 the process determines the initial estimates of point(s) positions in local camera coordinate(s) systems. Block 607 is the same as block 407 and will not be discussed here further. In block 609 the process optimizes the camera(s) geometry and the point(s) position. Block 609 is the same as block 409 and will not be discussed here further. In block 611 the process uses trilateration to determine the world coordinates of the point(s) positions. In one embodiment a processor is configured by program instructions to determine the position of P (e.g. vector X) by the intersection point of three spheres S_1 , S_2 , and S_3 . The processor may determine the position of P by utilizing as input the lengths of the vectors x_1 , x_2 , x_3 and the world coordinates of O_1 , O_2 , O_3 . The lengths of vectors x_1 , x_2 , and x_3 may be determined using equations [9], [10], and [11]. In some embodiments the process may yield more than one solution. In this case the ambiguity may be resolved by utilizing a fourth camera, Camera 4, located at position O_4 not included in FIG. 3 or 5. In this embodiment the trilateration process will solve for the intersection of four spheres. In block 613 the process saves the GPS coordinates of the point(s) positions. In one embodiment the process saves the GPS coordinates to a memory.

With reference to FIG. 7, in block 701 the process determines registration. Block 701 is the same as block 401 and will not be discussed here further. In block 703 the process receives GPS coordinates of at least two camera locations and IMU information from at least one of those camera locations. In some embodiments GPS coordinates may be WGS84 or ECEF or derived from WGS84 or ECEF. In other embodiment GPS coordinates may be coordinates that are derived from a relative position of a receiver with respect to transmission towers in a telecommunications system or in a radio frequency based system. In some embodiments, receiving GPS coordinates and IMU information comprises transferring GPS coordinate and IMU information for each of the images captured from a combined GPS receiver and IMU (GPS/IMU) device or a camera with built in GPS and IMU receiver to a memory or a buffer. The memory may be located in a general purpose computer or an embedded system. In some embodiments the GPS/IMU device acquires the GPS information and the IMU information non-synchronously. In this case the GPS and IMU information may be interpolated to achieve approximate synchronization. In other embodiments, receiving GPS coordinates or IMU information com-

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prises transferring GPS coordinate and IMU information for each of the images captured from memory to a processor for processing. In other embodiments, receiving GPS coordinates and IMU information comprises a person entering GPS coordinates and IMU information by hand into a general purpose computer or embedded system. In some embodiments IMU information comprises roll, pitch and yaw information. In some embodiments a GPS device and a IMU device are combined into a single device and referred to in the instant invention as GPS/IMU device. However, in other embodiments a GPS device and a IMU device are separate devices.

In block 705 the process determines the boresight rotation and translation. In some embodiments the boresight rotation may be the relative rotation between the GPS/IMU device coordinate system and the camera coordinate system. Also in some embodiments, the boresight translation may be the translation between the GPS/IMU device coordinate system and the camera coordinate system. Equation [25] below presents the relationship between the coordinates of point P in the GPS/IMU device coordinates and coordinates of the point P in the local camera 1 coordinates O_1 , using the elements from FIG. 3:

$$X_{gps/IMU} = R_b x_1 + T_b \quad [25]$$

where R_b is the boresight rotational matrix, T_b , is the boresight translational vector, x_1 is a vector of the position of point P in the local coordinate system O_1 , and $X_{gps/IMU}$ is the vector of the position of point P in the GPS/IMU coordinate system.

In block 707 the process determines initial estimates of the geometry between camera positions and orientations. Block 707 is the same as block 405 and will not be discussed here further. In block 709 the process determines the initial estimates of point(s) positions in local camera coordinate(s) systems. Block 709 is the same as block 407 however, since this embodiment at a minimum requires only two cameras for example Camera 1 and Camera 2, equation [15], which determines λ_{-1}^P , is determined for $c=2$ (two cameras) only. Also x_1 is determined by using equation [9]. In block 711 the process optimizes the camera(s) geometry and the point(s) position. Block 711 is the same as block 409 and will not be discussed here further. In block 713 the process determines the local north, east, down (NED) coordinates. In one embodiment a processor is configured by program instructions to perform equation [26] below where the NED coordinates are determined.

$$X_{NED} = R_y R_p R_r X_{gps/IMU} \quad [26]$$

where is the vector of the position of point P in the local NED coordinate system, R_y is a yaw rotation matrix determined from the GPS/IMU device, R_p is a pitch rotation matrix determined from the GPS/IMU device, R_r is a roll rotation matrix determined from the GPS/IMU device, and $X_{gps/IMU}$ is the vector of the position of point P in the GPS/IMU coordinate system. In block 715 the process determines the GPS coordinates for all point(s) positions for which correspondences were established through the registration block above in 701. In one embodiment a processor is configured by program instructions to determine GPS coordinates using equation [27] below:

$$X_{ECEF} = R_{NED} X_{NED} + T_{ECEF} \quad [27]$$

where X_{ECEF} is the vector of the position of point P in ECEF world coordinate system, R_{NED} is the rotation matrix

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for rotating between the NED coordinate system to the ECEF coordinate system, T_{ECEF} is the translation vector for translating between the NED coordinate system to the ECEF coordinate system. R_{NED} and T_{ECEF} are determined from the GPS data provided by the GPS/IMU device. In block 717 the process saves the GPS coordinates of the point(s) positions. In one embodiment the process saves the GPS coordinates to a memory. In another embodiment the process may not necessarily save the GPS coordinates but rather the process simply transmits the GPS coordinates. In another embodiment the process sends the GPS coordinates to a buffer or cache or another computing device.

Sometimes a GPS/IMU device or standalone GPS device is not available. In this instance we utilize ground truth points. Ground truth points are observed points in an image that have known GPS coordinates. When using the process depicted in FIG. 7, the NU information is derived from the ground truth points and their related geometry as is known in the art. When using the process depicted in FIG. 4, the GPS information is derived from the ground truth points as is known in the art.

There are situations where an observation or surveillance camera is used to monitor an area. However, the GPS coordinates of the observation/surveillance camera is not known. Yet we still want the UPS coordinates of the pixels and objects being observed in the camera. In order to obtain the GPS coordinates of various objects being viewed by the observation/surveillance camera we first determine GPS coordinates and the 3-D model of the 3-D scene that is being observed by the surveillance camera, using another camera(s) whose GPS location is known. By methods known in the art, calculate projection map from the observation/surveillance camera to the 3-D model determined as above. Calculate intersection of the projection ray through each pixel of the observation/surveillance camera with the 3-D model. Assign the GPS of the intersection point to the corresponding pixel of the observation/surveillance camera. In this method, it is assumed that the pixels observations correspond to objects located against the GPS referenced 3-D model. The applications of this process may include finding GPS of subjects (people), objects (vehicles), including the real-time observations from border security cameras, football stadium security cameras and public places security cameras.

The invention claimed is:

1. A method of determining Global Position System (GPS) coordinates of some image point(s) positions in at least two images using a processor configured by program instructions comprising:

- receiving GPS and Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU) coordinates of some of the positions where an image capture device captured an image;
- determining boresight rotation and translation between a GPS/IMU device coordinate system and a camera coordinate system;
- determining geometry between camera positions and orientations by triangulating various registration objects that appear in each image;
- determining north, east, down, (NED) coordinates of image point(s) in at least one of the images;
- determining GPS coordinates of the image point(s) positions in the at least one of the images;
- saving the GPS coordinates to memory.

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